

# NGO Advisory Committee

IBVM/Loreto and Congregation of Jesus (CJ) at the United Nations

15<sup>th</sup> July 2019

Greetings to each one in our network.

All of you will be aware that for the past two years our mission at the UN has been a joint IBVM/CJ ministry ever since Cynthia Matthews CJ joined Cecilia O'Dwyer IBVM at the UN NGO Office in New York. We are happy to inform you that we now have a new Advisory Committee for the NGO with the recent appointment of three CJ members. Adina Bălan CJ (Romania), Smitha Muthu CJ (Nepal), and Hilmtrud Wendorff CJ (Middle European Province) have joined Mary Eileen Donovan (Canada), Nigel Baker (UK), Janet Palafox IBVM (Australia & South East Asia), Monica Suchiang IBVM (South Asia), Wamuyu Wachira IBVM (Eastern Africa) and Pat Harvey IBVM (Southern Africa) to constitute this new committee which is truly international, comprising CJs, IBVMs and lay members from many different countries around the world.

## First Meeting of Joint Advisory Committee

The first online meeting of this new Advisory Committee took place on Wednesday 12<sup>th</sup> June. While all members were not able to attend, the benefits of being able to draw upon wisdom derived from such diverse cultural, global and ministry experiences was clearly evident. At this first meeting we reviewed the different aspects of the work of the NGO for refreshment and clarification as a new committee as well as considering the extensive work being done by our Reps in the New York office, together with that of the different networks. In introducing you to this new Advisory Committee, we felt that this is also an opportunity to share information about the work of the Advisory Committee to our NGO with the United Nations. The Advisory Committee meets online at least four times each year and considers the overall working of the NGO.

**A three-year strategic plan** provides the basis for our work and discussions focus on the different aspects of the work of the NGO which include:

- The ways we engage directly with the UN from UN Office.
- Our collaboration with other NGOs and groups to create impact at the United Nations.
- Ways in which we involve the Network in UN Processes. It includes input on specific topics from members of our network, participation in UN Forums or Conferences in venues other than New York
- Preparation of input for UN processes and Administrative work carried out at the office.
- Communication from NGO to Network and from Network to NGO.

At our **Advisory Committee Meetings** we review the Report submitted from the NGO Office which comprises the overall work of the NGO following the strategic plan. In addition to the Report, we receive the results of online meetings of the Province UN Representatives. We receive feed-back on participation of members of the IBVM/CJ network at events such as the recent UN Environment Forum and the UN Habitat Assembly held in Nairobi, Kenya and the Forum of Latin American and Caribbean countries held in Santiago, Chile. The quadrennial Report recently submitted to the Economic and Social Council and the Annual Review to the Department of Global Communications were also considered in our recent meeting. We also studied the results of the Impact Survey and considered what needs to be taken into account to move forward.

The importance of linking global with local and local with global is a high priority which is constantly emphasised at Advisory Committee level especially the importance of relating and reporting the tremendous work being done locally through Province ministries to the work of the UN NGO in New York. Advocacy at the local and national level is also an important dimension of overall collaboration with the United Nations.

## Province UN Representatives

While the NGO Advisory Committee focuses on the overall work of the NGO, the main link with the NGO Office and the animator at Province country level is the Province UN Representative. The ministry with the United Nations is an integral part of the overall JPIC ministry in each province. Because of the collaboration with the United Nations it includes specific aspects and tasks, as seen above. In the case of the CJ network the role of Province UN Representative is combined with that of Province JPIC coordinator. In the case of the IBVM Network, another person is dedicated to this role. To facilitate the work of the Province UN Representative and at the same time offer participation to members of the network with special interests some networks have been established such as the network on Human Trafficking and a network on Migration. These networks meet every four months and the Advisory Committee receives and reviews the notes from these meetings.

## Global Issues Networks

A network for UN related interests in Latin America and Carribean countries includes Argentina, Brazil, Chile and Peru. Cuba, while belonging to this network, is unable to participate in the online meetings.

Province Leadership plays a significant role in overseeing how our UN ministry works out in each Province/Country.

As a new and diverse Advisory Committee starting out together attention was given at our recent meeting to further development of the role of the Advisory Committee and a new strategic plan. The issue of **language and translation** was prominent in light of our extended membership and our presence in many more countries with different languages, as was communication.

Growthful challenges are there for us as an Advisory Committee on such issues, and undoubtedly more will materialise. But for now, we are excited and hopeful, and delighted to be facing these challenges together as one body enriched by the wisdom and experience of each member. We look forward to connecting with you all through the work of our UN NGO.

United with you in the ministry of our UN NGO



Pat Hanvey ibvm (Chairperson)

On behalf of all

Members of the Advisory Committee

